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Baltic
WPA

7 July 1951

TO: Chief, STC/Operational Clearance Officer
FROM: Chief, FUS
SUBJECT: Request for Provisional Clearance

1. Provisional operational clearance is requested for Alfreds Berzins whose PRQ forms Part I and II are enclosed herewith. It should be noted that owing to the fact that Mr. Berzins' English is far from fluent, Part I of his PRQ forms may be a bit difficult to understand.

2. At the present time Berzins is an employee of the National Committee for Free Europe and will remain in that position in the future. Berzins will be utilized to furnish leads of prospective Baltic agents and instructors as well as any information regarding the Baltic States and Russia as may be of interest to this organization. For these services Berzins will not receive any remuneration although he will be compensated for any expenses incurred in connection with the aforementioned activities.

3. At the present time Berzins does not fall within any approved project. However, an overall Latvian project is being formulated, approval of which will enable us to incorporate Berzins into such project.

4. The following two items regarding Berzins appear in the Central Registry files:

a. "Formerly a Minister in the Ulmanis Cabinet in Latvia, who was in touch with the Japanese in Helsinki in 1940, through whom he obtained a Manchurian passport. (Berzins is an) adventurer and untrustworthy."

b. "Gestapo agent. Betrayed to Gestapo the Director of the firm 'Ostlandfilm' and caused two members of the firm to be placed in a concentration camp." (1945 information).

No explanation regarding (a) has been obtained from Berzins nor can the case officer shed any further light on the matter. However, the statement that Berzins is an adventurer and untrustworthy can be disregarded as utterances made by an individual who is either politically or personally opposed to him. Regarding (b) the following desk comment is on file in the Baltic Section:

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This is not believed to be correct as Bernins today is a member of the board of governors of this same film company which is today known as Riga Films and is located in Hamburg, Germany, and whose present as well as past director is Mr. Jakste, a man who has never been denounced to the Gestapo.

The allegations, outlined above, which generally tend to show that Bernins has been an axis collaborator do not appear to be feasible, since it is quite improbable for him to have been incarcerated in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp for 33 months, had he collaborated with the axis powers.

5. OSO operational files and documents contain no information of investigative value or security interest in addition to that set forth herein.

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